

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
EUGENE DISTRICT OFFICE

Decision Record and Finding of No Significant Impact
Big River - Edwards Creek Aquatic Habitat Restoration
Environmental Assessment No. OR 095-EA-99-8

Background:

An Environmental Assessment (EA) and Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the Big River - Edwards Creek Aquatic Habitat Restoration Project were prepared by the South Valley Resource Area, Eugene District Office. The proposal is to: 1) increase stream channel complexity in Big River and Edwards Creek in order to increase the productive capacity for resident salmonids and other aquatic organisms, 2) increase the stability of the channel in order to retain woody material and sedimentary materials in the channel, 3) increase the water storage capacity, and moderate streamflow patterns during low and high flow periods, 4) improve passage to upstream habitat for migrating fish, and 5) develop future coarse woody debris to the riparian and stream channel.

Management objectives are to:

Implement watershed analysis recommendations for Big River - Edwards Creek by increasing the quantity and quality of fish habitat and Large Woody Debris (LWD) recruitment potential.

Comply with the Aquatic Conservation Strategy Objectives in the Record of Decision (ROD) for the Northwest Forest Plan.

FONSI:

On the basis of the information contained in the Environmental Assessment, and all other information available to me, it is my determination that implementation of the proposed action or alternatives will not have significant environmental impacts not already addressed in the *Record of Decision (ROD) for Amendments to Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management Planning Documents Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl* (April 1994) and the *Eugene District Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan* (June 1995), with which this EA is in conformance, and does not, in and of itself, constitute a major federal action having a significant effect on the human environment. Therefore, an environmental impact statement or a supplement to the existing environmental impact statement is not necessary and will not be prepared.

Decision:

The decision is to implement the Proposed Action of the Big River - Edwards Creek Aquatic Habitat Restoration Project as analyzed in EA OR090-99-8. The Big River - Edwards Creek Aquatic Habitat Restoration is located in Sections 7, 8, and 16, T. 22 S., R. 3 W., and Section 12, T. 23 S., R. 3 W. Willamette Meridian. An estimated 3 miles of stream would be treated using a combination of boulders and mature conifers. The mitigation measures, design features, and management requirements, as described in the EA, are hereby adopted.

The Proposed Action is tiered to the Record of Decision for Amendments to Forest Service and Bureau of

Land Management Planning Documents with the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl, April 1994, and the Eugene District Record of Decision (ROD)/Resource Management Plan (RMP), May 1995.

Rationale:

The Proposed Action was selected because it best meets the objectives listed above. The No Action alternative would not contribute to an increase in fish habitat, productive capacity of the stream, or improve fish passage to upstream habitat. In addition, some existing quality habitat could be lost without action, and a large portion of upstream habitat would continue to be unavailable to aquatic-dependent species.

CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

A public notice advertising the availability of the EA and FONSI appeared in the Eugene Register-Guard on May 5, 1999. Additionally, the EA and FONSI were mailed to interested individuals and organizations (EA, p. 14). A 30-day public comment period closed on June 4, 1999. No comments were received.

Pursuant to the Endangered Species Act, consultation was completed with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which found that the action "is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of the spotted owl or result in the adverse modification of spotted owl critical habitat."

There are no proposed or listed fish species under the Endangered Species Act located in or near the project area; therefore, consultation with the National Marine Fisheries Service or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is not necessary.

ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW OPPORTUNITIES

The decision to implement this project may be appealed to the Office of Hearings and Appeals, Office of the Secretary, U.S. Department of the Interior, in accordance with the regulations contained in 43 CFR Part 4. If an appeal is taken, the notice of appeal must be filed in this office within thirty (30) days of the first publication of the notice of this decision in the Eugene Register-Guard on July 14, 1999, for transmittal to the Board. A copy of the notice of appeal and any statement of reasons, written arguments, or briefs, must also be served upon the Regional Solicitor, Pacific Northwest Region, U.S. Department of the Interior, 500 NE Multnomah Street, Suite 607, Portland, Oregon 97323, within the same time frame. In taking an appeal, there must be strict compliance with the regulations. In accordance with 43 CFR 4.21, an appellant has the right to petition the Office of Hearing and Appeals to stay the implementation of the decision; however, an appellant must show standing and present reasons for requesting a stay of the decision. The petition for stay must be filed together with a timely notice of appeal.

Signed by: Steven A. Calish
Field Manager, South Valley Resource Area

July 7, 1999